Nebraska
CHARACTER EDUCATION
GUIDELINES

Nebraska Department of Education
2002

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CHARACTER EDUCATION
Guidelines

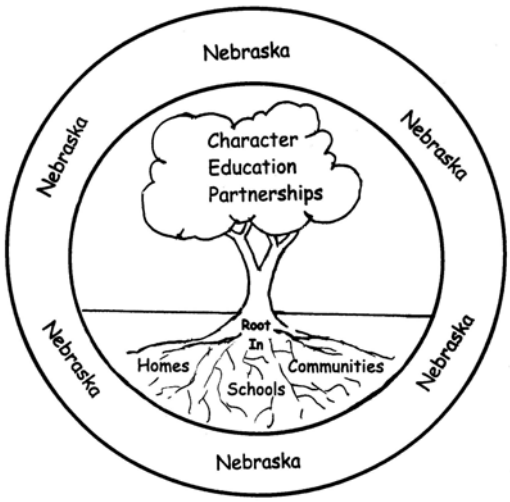

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

"Children are 25% of our population and 100% of our future."
Anonymous

Nebraskans have long been known for their honesty, morality, courtesy, citizenship, respect for others, and positive work ethic. Traditionally they have been unwilling to abandon these ideas and standards that have served them so well. But today's children face great uncertainties in a complex and sometimes violent society. These traits are not always readily apparent and easily grasped or emulated. Therefore our challenge as educators is to provide Nebraska students with the model and guidelines necessary to become upright citizens of tomorrow.

Abuses and ethical breakdowns in government, business, media and society at large emphasize the need for an intentional focus on character development. To be effective, this focus must become a joint venture among home, school and community. Even when values are taught at home, they need to be reinforced and emphasized in the community, where peer pressure can erode parental training and in the school, where children spend the majority of their time. Historically and legally, schools must become major players in this arena.

The Department of Education urges educators to read this publication carefully and use it as a guideline for implementing an effective character education program. Not all programs will look alike. These Guidelines encourage schools and communities to evaluate and address their own individual needs, concerns and values. Administrators are encouraged to look at Character Education, not as an add-on, but as an integrated part of their school climate and Improvement Plan. Teachers are encouraged to infuse character attributes into daily instruction focused on the Nebraska L.E.A.R.N.S. and Links to L.E.A.R.N.S.

Character education is celebrating what is right with young people of today while empowering them with the knowledge and skills necessary to become upright, productive citizens of tomorrow.

Doug Christensen
Commissioner of Education

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INTRODUCTION

Educating children to become productive, honest citizens has long been a goal of the people of Nebraska. In 1927, State Senator Allen S. Stinson of Knox County introduced legislation defining the schools' role in Character Education. Such personal characteristics as honesty, morality, courtesy, obedience to law, respect for the national flag, the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Nebraska, and for parents and the home have been identified in Nebraska Law 79-725 as desirable attributes for Nebraska citizens.

The *Nebraska Character Education Guidelines* have been published to help Nebraska educators implement the intent of this law and strengthen the character traits of Nebraska's young people. These *Guidelines*, designed by teachers, community members and representatives of the University of Nebraska and the State Department of Education, were developed to give direction to administrators and teachers as they design programs and curriculum that effectively integrate Character Education concepts into individual classrooms and the total school climate. Effectively implemented, Character Education is not a stand-alone program but woven into the very fabric of all that schools and communities teach and do.

Research indicates that the most successful Character Education programs are a comprehensive effort involving families, schools and entire communities. Hence, in these *Guidelines*, one will see references to how the character traits can be practiced and strengthened in each of these settings.

The *Nebraska Character Education Guidelines* begins with the legal basis for Character Education in Nebraska Schools. In Chapter 1, you will find the Nebraska statute (79-725) citing the role of all teachers in Character Education. Chapter 2 defines Character Education and addresses the need for comprehensive programs addressing this topic. Components of an effective Character Education program are included in Chapter 3, and the integration of those programs into the *L.E.A.R.N.S.* (Leading Educational Achievement through Rigorous Nebraska Standards) and the *Links to L.E.A.R.N.S* is discussed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 provides Character Education resources and bibliographic citations for those interested in pursuing additional information. Specific *Standards* and *Links to L.E.A.R.N.S.* relating to Character Education are cited in Appendices A-L.

This publication is only a guideline for Character Education. It remains the school's responsibility to develop and implement effective instructional strategies and create a school climate that fulfills the intent of the law. The task in front of us is a worthy challenge. It requires the concerted efforts of families, schools and communities "to promote and develop an upright and desirable citizenry" (Nebraska Statute 79-725).

Larry Starr, Project Co-Director

CHAPTER ONE
Legal Basis for Character Education in Nebraska Schools

When European colonists established permanent settlements in the New World, they made provisions for the education of their children. Character Education was among their most important educational concerns. It was usually buttressed by religious precepts or by the proverbs or wise sayings of highly respected individuals.

Regardless of whether schools were publicly supported as in New England, church supported as in the middle colonies, or privately supported as in the southern colonies, the approach to education was much the same. While modest attention was given to the academic qualifications (reading, writing, and arithmetic skills) of colonial educators, great emphasis was placed on their personal character and decorum. Teachers were expected to be of sound moral character, as well as be "sound in the faith". One only has to examine a copy of *The New England Primer* to observe the attention accorded Character Education in colonial instruction.

The Constitution of the United States makes no reference to education. Nevertheless, the architects of the Constitution recognized a need for Character Education. Benjamin Franklin, a prominent member of the Constitutional Convention, wrote in his *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania*: "On historical questions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, will naturally arise, and may be put to youth, which they may debate in conversation and in writing." Examining public statements like those of Franklin and other members of the Constitutional Convention reveals a similar concern for Character Education.

Nebraska's State Constitution, Section 4, Article 1, mirrors the language of the Northwest Ordinance enacted in 1787, when it states: "Religion, morality, and knowledge, however, being essential to good government, it shall be the duty of the Legislature to pass suitable laws to protect every religious denomination in the peaceable enjoyment of its own mode of public worship, and to encourage schools and the means of instruction." Similar language appeared in other state constitutions adopted somewhat earlier than Nebraska's. From this language it appears that the authors of the Nebraska State Constitution desired schools to undertake the task of Character Education.

The legal basis for the implementation of Character Education in 20th Century schools is found in Nebraska law first enacted in 1927.

Statute 79-725 ***Character education; principles of instruction; duty of teachers.*** *Each teacher employed to give instruction in any public, private, parochial or denominational school in the State of Nebraska shall arrange and present his or her instruction to give special emphasis to common honesty, morality, courtesy, obedience to law, respect for the national flag, the United States Constitution, and the Constitution of Nebraska, respect for parents and the home, the dignity and necessity of honest labor, and other lessons of steadying influence which tend to promote and develop an upright and desirable citizenry.*

Statute 79-726 Character education; outline of instruction; duty of Commissioner of Education. *The Commissioner of Education shall prepare an outline with suggestions such as in his or her judgment will best accomplish the purpose set forth in Section 79-725 and shall incorporate the same in the regular course of study for the first twelve grades of all schools of the State of Nebraska.*

Statute 79-727, Character education; violation; penalty. *Any person violating the provisions of sections 79-725 to 79-726 is guilty of a Class III misdemeanor.*

The Nebraska Department of Education has followed the intent of these laws by providing program support and encouragement to public schools and their teachers. These Character Education Guidelines, developed by the Nebraska Department of Education, give guidance to Nebraska schools as they strive to carry out statutes related to Character Education.

CHAPTER TWO
Character Education: Definitions and Needs

Character Education is as old as education itself. Down through history, all over the world, education has had two great goals:

1. To help people become smart
2. To help them become good

The intent of this section is to clarify the meaning of Character Education in relation to school laws dealing with this matter. The continuing need for such education in our schools is also reinforced.

Dictionary Definitions

- Character. *The American Heritage Dictionary* lists several definitions for character. Four apply to education:
  1. A distinguished feature or attribute; a characteristic
  2. The moral ethical structure of a person or group
  3. Moral strength; integrity
  4. Reputation

Definitions from other dictionaries are very similar. The definition that seems most appropriate to educational purposes is: the moral or ethical structure of a person or group.

- Education. Among the many definitions of education from which one might choose, that which seems to best convey the concept we have in mind is the teaching and learning of the mental and moral powers, either by a system of study and discipline, or by the experiences of life.

Gordon Vessels and Stephen Boyd, in their work Public and Constitutional Support For Character Education wrote, "*Character Education can be defined as strategic instruction that promotes social and personal responsibility and the development of the good character traits and moral virtues that make this possible.*"

Character as Viewed by Prominent Public Figures

Many public figures have addressed the meaning of character and its importance in human life:

- *"To educate a person in mind and not morals is to educate a menace to society."* Theodore Roosevelt, American President

- *"We in the business world don't want young people coming into our employment and into our communities who are brilliant, but dishonest; who have great intellectual knowledge, but don't really care about others; who have highly creative minds, but are irresponsible. All of us in business and the entire adult community need to do our part in helping build young people of high character. There isn't a more critical issue in education today."* Sanford N. McDonnell, Chairman emeritus of the former McDonnell Douglas Corporation

- *"Character and personal force are the only investments that are worth anything. The great hope of society is in individual character."* Walt Whitman, American poet

- *"Character building begins in our infancy and continues until death."* Eleanor Roosevelt, American First Lady

- *"We want the spirit of America to be efficient; we want American character to be efficient; we want American character to display itself in what I may, perhaps, be allowed to call spiritual efficiency-clear disinterested thinking and fearless action along the right lines of thought."* Woodrow Wilson, American President

- *"Virtue and vice will not grow together in a great degree, but they will grow where they are planted, and when one has taken root, it is not easily supplanted by the other. The greater art of correcting mankind consists in prepossessing the mind with good principles."* Noah Webster, author of *Webster's Dictionary*

- *"Clearly we can all agree about the importance of teaching our children, both as individuals and as members of society, the importance of common values such as respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, and citizenship."* Richard W. Riley, U.S. Secretary of Education

- *"How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and the strong. Because someday in your life, you will have been all of these."* George Washington Carver, American inventor

- *"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."* Martin Luther King, Jr., United States Civil Rights leader

- *"Wherever man goes to dwell his character goes with him."* African Proverb

Social Imperatives for Character Education

An anonymous sage observed, "Children are 25% of our population but 100% of our future." Because the character of our action depends on the character of the young people now coming to maturity, ten current trends in youth character are cause for deep concern:

1. Rising youth violence
2. Increasing dishonesty (lying, cheating, and stealing)
3. Growing disrespect for parents, teachers, and other legitimate authority figures
4. Increasing peer cruelty

5. A rise in prejudice and hate crime
6. A deterioration of language
7. Decline in the work ethic
8. Declining personal and civic responsibility
9. Increasing self-destructive behaviors such as sexual activity, substance abuse, and suicide
10. Growing ethical illiteracy, including ignorance of moral knowledge as basic as the Golden Rule and the tendency to engage in destructive behavior without thinking it wrong.

Taken from "Signs of a National Crisis of Character", Center For the 4th and 5th Rs

Examples of these troubling trends are all around us:

- According to 2000 FBI statistics, arrests of 13 and 14-year-olds for rape nearly doubled during the past decade.
- A 1998 random nation-wide survey of over 15,000 teenagers conducted by the Josephson Institute of Ethics found:
    - Seven out of ten high school students cheated on an exam at least once in the past year.
    - 73% indicated they lied repeatedly.
    - More than one in three high school students would lie to get a good job.
    - 47% admitted they stole something from a store in the previous 12-month period.
    - 91% reported that they were "satisfied with my own ethics and character".
- The 1997 Center for Disease Control's *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* indicated:
    - 18.3% of high school students carried a weapon during the 30 days preceding the survey.
    - 32.9% of students nationwide had property stolen or deliberately damaged on school grounds one or more times during the 12 months preceding the survey.

The Nebraska Crime Commission's *2000 Preliminary Nebraska Crime Report* reflects similar trends:

- During 1999, juvenile arrests accounted for 41% of the arrests for index offenses (murder, non-negligent manslaughter, rape, forgery, assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.).
- From 1978 to 1997, juvenile arrests for violent crimes increased 26%.
- From 1978-1997, juvenile arrests for simple assault, which is not considered a violent crime but had the potential to be violent, increased 519%.
- 12,007 juveniles were on probation in Nebraska in 1997.
- 13 to 14-year-olds accounted for 23% of the total arrests for arson in 1999.
- Juveniles accounted for 44% of the total number arrested for larceny-theft.
- In 1999, arrests of youth under the age of ten included: 156 for larceny-theft, 26 for arson, 40 for simple assault, and 81 for vandalism.

Children hold up a mirror to society. The disturbing trends in youth character clearly reflect a wider crisis of character in our nation as a whole.

"If we are to reach real peace in this world…we shall have to begin with the children."
Mohandas Gandhi, 20th-century, Nobel Prize winner, Indian nonviolent civil rights leader

Throughout the history of our country, our homes and schools have sought to develop in our young people such positive character traits as honesty, morality, courtesy, and respect for others. The American Founders believed that democracy has a special need for Character Education, because democracy is government by the people themselves. The people must therefore be good, must develop "democratic virtues" including: respect for the rights of individuals, regard for law, voluntary participation in public life, and concern for the common good.

As societal problems have worsened, the concern for Character Education has made a comeback. Adults realize that young people need moral direction. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to provide it – to pass on a moral heritage. The school has a responsibility to stand for good values and help students form their character around such values. Character Education is directive rather than non-directive; it asserts the rightness of certain values – such as respect, responsibility, honesty, caring, and fairness – and helps students to understand, care about, and act upon these values in their lives.

Developing these traits has the best chance for success when home, school, and society reinforce each other's efforts. If values taught in the home are not reinforced by teachers at school, if values taught at school are not practiced in the home, or if values taught and practiced in home and school are ignored by public figures, the opportunities for successful Character Education are greatly diminished. Similarly, when the schools promote the development of values significantly different from those advocated by the home, children are confused, and character development is seriously impeded.

Thomas Lickona in *The Return of Character Education* quotes Heraclitus, an ancient Greek philosopher as saying, "Character is destiny." As we confront the causes of our deepest societal problems, whether in our intimate relationships or public institutions, questions of character loom large. As we close out a turbulent century and ready our school for the next, educating for character is a moral imperative if we care about the future of our society and our children.

The Nebraska Department of Education recognizes the social imperative for effective Character Education and is acutely aware of its responsibility. In accordance with Nebraska Law 79-727, the Nebraska Department of Education has made and continues to make suggestions to Nebraska educators regarding the development of effective Character Education programs. The Department favors the provision of broad general guidelines that permit local schools to select options that seem most appropriate to their own needs.

In the remainder of this publication the components of Character Education as identified in School Law 79-727 will be addressed. Ways in which these components may be given appropriate emphasis in the public and private schools of Nebraska are suggested.

CHAPTER THREE
Components of Effective Character Education

Consistent with the commitment noted in the preceding chapter, the Nebraska Department of Education believes the general traits of good character identified in Nebraska school laws form an appropriate basis upon which to build effective Character Education programs. This chapter provides an overview of a comprehensive approach to Character Education and twelve specific strategies that should be considered. Nine of those strategies are for classroom implementation and three are for school-wide implementation. At the conclusion of this chapter, the importance and role of school/community teams will be discussed as they apply to effective Character Education.

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO CHARACTER EDUCATION?

Dr. Thomas Lickona, a professor of education at SUNY College in Cortland, New York and founder of the 4th and 5th Rs, writes the following regarding a comprehensive approach to Character Education:

1. A comprehensive approach to character education defines character comprehensively to include its cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. Good character consists of moral habits of the mind, habits of the heart, and habits of action.

2. It asserts that these moral habits, or virtues, are acquired through practice. This process is captured by James Stenson's statement, "Children develop character by what they see, what they hear, and what they are repeatedly led to do."

3. It seeks to provide students with repeated, real-life experiences that develop all three parts of character.

4. It provides these character-building experiences through all phases of school life, including the formal as well as the informal ("hidden") curriculum. Schools maximize their moral influence when they use all parts of school life as deliberate opportunities for character development.

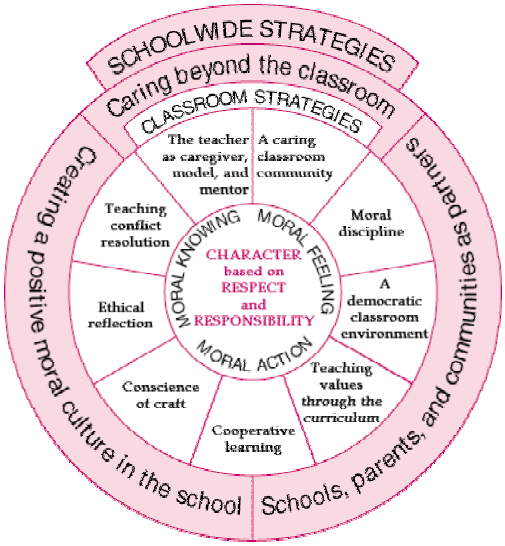
5. It asserts that there is no such thing as value-free education. A school teaches values in everything it does – including the way teachers and other adults treat students, the way the principal treats teachers, the way the school treats parents, and the way students are allowed to treat each other. ("One of the most powerful forms of moral education is the treatment we receive." – Peter McPhail.)

6. It is proactive – creating opportunities for teaching values and character – as well as responsive to opportunities (teachable moral moments) that spontaneously arise. Character education does not wait for something to go wrong before teaching what is right.

7. A school committed to a comprehensive approach to character:
    - Publicly stands for core ethical values
    - Defines these values in terms of observable behavior
    - Models these values at every opportunity
    - Celebrates their occurrence in and outside of school
    - Studies them and teaches their application to everyday life, including all parts of the school environment (e.g., classrooms, corridors, cafeteria, playing field, school bus)

In addition, Lickona provides a detailed *12-Point Comprehensive Approach to Character Education* found on the next several pages. This model, printed as published at **www.cortland.edu/www/c4n5rs/** , may be adapted and modified to appropriately meet the needs of individual schools and communities.

The 12-Point Comprehensive Approach to Character Education is used with permission of Professor Thomas Lickona, Center for the 4th and 5th Rs, SUNY Cortland, P.O. Box 2000, NY 13045.



9 CLASSROOM STRATEGIES **(inner portion of wheel):**

1. **A caring classroom community**: Teaching students to respect and care about each other.
2. **Moral discipline**: Using rules and consequences to develop moral reasoning, self-control, and generalized respect for others.
3. **A democratic classroom environment**: Using the class meeting to engage students in shared decision-making and in taking responsibility for making the classroom the best it can be.
4. **Teaching values through the curriculum**: Using the ethically rich content of academic subjects as vehicles for values teaching.
5. **Cooperative learning**: Fostering students' ability to work with and appreciate others.
6. **The "conscience of craft":** Developing students' sense of academic responsibility and the habit of doing their work well.
7. **Ethical reflection**: Developing the cognitive side of character through reading, research, writing, and discussion.
8. **Conflict resolution**: Teaching students how to solve conflicts fairly, without intimidation or violence.
9. **The teacher as caregiver, model, and ethical mentor**: Treating students with love and respect, encouraging right behavior, and correcting wrongful actions.

3 STRATEGIES FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL **(outer portion of wheel):**

1. **Caring beyond the classroom**: Using role models to inspire altruistic behavior and providing opportunities for school and community service.
2. **Creating a positive moral culture in the school**: Developing a caring school community that promotes the core values.
3. **Parents and community as partners**: Helping parents and the whole community join the schools.

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

CREATING A CARING CLASSROOM COMMUNITY: Teaching students to respect and care about each other.

Key Ideas

1. Just as children need caring attachments to adults, they also need caring attachments to each other. They are much more likely to accept the values and rules of the group when they feel accepted and affirmed by the group.

2. The peer culture is a powerful moral teacher and influence on student behavior. If teachers do not help to shape a positive peer culture -- one that supports the ethical values adults are trying to teach -- the peer culture will often develop in the opposite direction, creating peer norms (e.g., cruelty to kids who are different, disrespect for rules and adult authority) that are antithetical to good character.

3. When students are part of a legitimate caring moral community in the classroom, they learn morality by living it. They receive respect and care and practice giving it in return. Through daily experiences, respect and care gradually become habits -- part of their character.

Strategies

Teachers can create a moral community in the classroom by helping students to:

1. Know each other as persons

2. Respect, care about, and affirm each other -- and refrain from peer cruelty (both abuse and exclusion)

3. Feel valued membership in, and responsibility to, the group (including practicing an ethic of interdependence: "Who has a problem the rest of us might be able to help solve?").

Example:
Laura LoParco, resource room teacher: stopping a third-grade class's cruelty to Rhonda, a child with a learning disability:

What you are doing is hurting Rhonda here [pointing to her own head]*, in her mind. You can't see the hurt, but it's very real. You can make her think that she is stupid and the kind of person that nobody will like. That may stay in her mind for a very long time, even years. It may affect her ability to learn and her ability to make friends with other people. You have a decision to make: Do you wish to continue doing this?*

MORAL DISCIPLINE: Using rules and consequences to develop moral reasoning, self-control, and a generalized respect for others.

Key Ideas

1. Discipline must be a tool for moral growth, helping students to develop self-control and a generalized respect for others. Discipline without moral education is merely crowd control -- managing behavior without teaching morality.

2. Rules should be established in a way that develops moral reasoning by helping students see the values (e.g., courtesy and caring) behind the rules. The emphasis should be not on extrinsic rewards and punishment but on following the rules because it's the right thing to do -- respectful of self and others. Research shows that emphasis on external incentives undermines intrinsic motivation.

3. Consequences of rule-breaking should contribute to character development, helping students understand why the rule is needed and increasing their feeling of moral obligation to respect it.

4. The teacher is the central moral authority in the classroom, responsible for students' moral and academic learning, safety, and general welfare. While exercising authority, however, the teacher can invite students to share responsibility for classroom order.

Strategies

1. Especially at the elementary level, children need the experience of helping to construct good rules for the classroom, so that they develop moral insight into the necessity of rules (groups can't function without them) and develop a commitment to following them.

2. Students also benefit from helping to create at least some of the consequences of rule-breaking. For example, what is a fair and educational consequence for putting someone down? (Restitution is needed to repair the damage done to the relationship.) The teacher can guide students to see that good consequences do not have the purpose of making someone suffer but are designed to help them gain control over their behavior so they can participate effectively in the group.

3. Time-out, like other character-building consequences, works best when it helps students make a connection between their behavior and the relevant rule or value, and make a plan to improve their behavior in the future.

A DEMOCRATIC CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT: Using the class meeting to engage students in shared decision making and in taking responsibility for making the classroom the best it can be.

Key Ideas:

1. Creating a democratic classroom environment means involving students, on a regular basis and in developmentally appropriate ways, in shared decision making that increases their responsibility for helping to make the classroom a good place to be and learn.
2. A democratic classroom contributes to character because it:

    - Provides an ongoing forum where students' thoughts are valued and where any need of the group can be addressed

    - Creates a support structure that calls forth students' best moral selves by strengthening community and holding them accountable to practice respect and responsibility

    - Mobilizes the peer culture on the side of virtue, because students are working with the teacher in a continuing partnership to create the moral culture of the classroom.

    - The chief means of creating a democratic classroom environment is the class meeting, a face-to-face circle meeting emphasizing interactive discussion and problem solving.

Teaching Strategies

1. Meetings go better when there are clear rules for talking and listening and consequences of breaking them, and when students help to set the agenda.

2. Meetings can deal with problems (cutting in lunch line, put- downs, homework problems) or help to plan upcoming events (the day, a field trip, a cooperative activity, the next unit).

3. Problem-solving class meetings have the best chance of helping students go beyond "saying the right words" to actually improving their moral behavior when:

- The teacher poses the problem in the collective voice: *"How can we, working together, solve this problem?"*
- After a solution is reached, asks: *"What should we do if someone doesn't keep our class agreement?"*
- Writes up the agreement and consequence(s) as a Class Agreement or Contract
- Has everyone sign it to show personal commitment.
- Posts it in a visible spot for easy reference.
- Plans with the class when to have a follow-up meeting to assess how the new plan is working; then follows through.

TEACHING VALUES THROUGH THE CURRICULUM: Using the ethically rich content of academic subjects as vehicles for values teaching.

Key Ideas

1. Character education isn't a separate subject; rather it can be taught through any subject.

2. The highest purpose of the curriculum is moral: to help students develop a sense of what is noble and good and worth striving for in life. The curriculum should help students think about the most fundamental human questions: *How should I live my life? What goals are worth pursuing? What qualities in human beings are admirable and worth emulating? What brings about human fulfillment and what does not?*

Strategies

1. The teacher's task is to ask, *"What are the intersections between the curriculum I wish to cover and the values I wish to teach?"* A science teacher can emphasize the importance of precise and truthful reporting of data; a social studies teacher can examine prejudice and discrimination, etc.

2. Ed Wynne and Kevin Ryan, in their article "Curriculum as a Moral Educator," argue that the curriculum, especially history and literature, can foster young people's emotional attraction to goodness. It can help them learn to love good people and good ideals. It does this by enabling them to:

    - Develop an intellectual and emotional understanding of the lives and motivations of good and evil people

    - Acquire a strong sense of justice and compassion and of greed and cruelty by studying literary and historical figures

    - Be emotionally attracted by some lives and repelled by others

    - Develop a storehouse of moral examples to guide them

- See the truth of certain "moral facts of life" by seeing them borne out in the lives of literature's and history's heroes and villains. Such moral facts of life include:

    a. Human kindness is essential to a fully functioning society.
    b. We owe a special love to our parents and families.
    c. Honesty and trust are vital in human relationships.
    d. We are obliged to help those less fortunate than ourselves.
    e. Generosity of spirit, not selfishness, brings happiness.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING: Fostering students' ability to work with and appreciate others.

Key Ideas

1. The instructional process is an important means of character development.

2. Cooperative learning is an especially effective character-building process because it gives students regular practice in developing important virtues at the same time they are learning academic material. Cooperative learning helps them develop communication and perspective-taking skills, the ability to work as part of a team, and appreciation of others who are different from oneself.

3. Cooperative learning builds community in the classroom. It integrates every student and breaks down barriers.

Strategies

1. Cooperative learning, to be appealing to students and effective as an academic and character-building strategy, should be designed to include both interdependence and individual accountability. (For example: Everyone is needed in the group, but each must demonstrate mastery at the end.)

2. The format should vary (e.g., learning partners; support groups where students must ask each other a question before they can ask the teacher; team testing; jigsaw learning; small-group projects; whole-class projects, etc.).

3. Time should be spent teaching students the skills and roles they need to make cooperative learning go well.

4. Time should be spent engaging students in reflecting on how well they cooperated on a given assignment and how they can make needed improvements the next time.

5. The teacher and students should develop guidelines that will maximize effective cooperation and provide reference points for evaluation.

Example:
From Betty House's 5th-grade class:

GROUP MEMBERS CONTRIBUTE THEIR BEST WHEN …

- We are kind to each other.
- There is no put downs.
- We listen to and try to use everyone's ideas.
- Everyone has a job to do.
- No one goofs off.
- People don't complain.
- Someone compliments me.

THE "CONSCIENCE OF CRAFT: Developing students' sense of academic responsibility and the habit of doing their work well.

Key Ideas

1. One of the most common ways our character affects the lives of others is through the quality of the work we do. When we do our work well, others benefit; when we do it poorly, others suffer.

2. One of the most important "voices" of conscience, therefore, is the conscience of craft, the voice that says: "Do a good job." It is a mark of people's character when they take care to perform their jobs and other tasks well.

3. A student's schoolwork affords the opportunity to develop work-related character traits that have lifelong importance:

    - Self-discipline, including the ability to delay gratification in order to pursue future goals
    - Persistence in the face of discouragement or failure
    - Dependability, including a public sense of work as affecting the lives of others
    - Diligence, concern to do a good job
    - Academic responsibility (e.g., making the most of one's education).

Strategies

Teachers help students develop these work-related character qualities when they:

1. Set a good example of responsible work through their own teaching -- being well-prepared and on time, returning student work promptly and with comments, giving extra help where needed, etc. Writes Ed Wynne: "A teacher's first obligation as a moral educator is to teach well."

2. Combine high expectations and high support -- the belief that every child can learn and teaching strategies that enable every student to learn.

3. Challenge students to develop real expertise. (Jerome Bruner: "Students must be able to probe a subject deeply. They should not have an education of the fingertips that touches everything but seizes nothing.")

4. Provide a meaningful curriculum, including teaching to students' interests and strengths. Says Ann Halpern, a 2nd and 3rd-grade teacher: "Valuing children's interests is one of the most authentic ways of helping them to value themselves."

5. Assign regular and meaningful homework.

ETHICAL REFLECTION: Developing the cognitive side of character through reading, research, writing, and discussion.

Key Ideas:

1. Encouraging ethical reflection means helping students develop the cognitive side of character: (1) being morally aware; (2) having an understanding of virtues and how to apply them in concrete situations; (3) being able to take the perspective of others; (4) being able to reason morally (why are some things right and others wrong?); being able to make thoughtful moral decisions (the virtue of prudence); and having self-knowledge, including the capacity for self-criticism (the virtue of humility).

2. Children's moral thinking develops through a series of stages (summarized in *Raising Good Children*, p. 12). Some individuals move faster through the stages, and some get farther. At each higher stage, students have a better understanding of what's right and the reason why a person should do what's right. What promotes development through the stages is any kind of interactive moral experience (e.g., being asked a thought-producing moral question, moral dialogue, a class meeting, cooperative learning, conflict resolution) that engages the child in perspective-taking and solving moral problems (e.g., *what's fair?*).

Strategies

1. Teachers can foster ethical reflection in many ways: reading; research; discussion of hypothetical moral dilemmas, historical dilemmas, and moral issues from students' lives and the world around them; essays; journal-keeping; and debate.

2. Teachers can develop their insight into children's moral thinking and their ability to stimulate development to higher stages by studying the moral stages and interviewing students one-on-one.

For example: Here is an interview with Amy, age 8. She shows "stage mix," using more than one stage of reasoning in responding to "Kenny's dilemma" (stage mix is typical):

> Kenny is walking to the store. It's his mother's birthday on Saturday. He's feeling bad because he hasn't been able to save up enough money to get her the present he'd like to give her. Then, on the sidewalk, he finds a wallet with $10 in it -- just

what he needs to buy the present! But there's an identification card in the wallet telling the name and address of the owner. What should Kenny do?

Interviewer: What do you think Kenny should do?
Amy: Kenny should return the money.
Interviewer: Why do you think that would be the best thing to do?
Amy: If anyone found out that he kept the money, he would get in trouble. His mother would punish him for lying. Anyway, keeping the money that didn't belong to him would be like stealing. Someone might tell the police.
Amy's reasoning here is Stage 1. Fear of punishment is the basis for deciding what's right to do. In response to the interviewer's continued questioning, however, Amy demonstrates that she is capable of higher-stage reasoning:

Teacher: Are there any other reasons why Kenny should return the money?
Amy: If Kenny returned the money, he could tell his mother what happened. She would be glad he'd been honest. That would be birthday present enough.
Interviewer: Is it always easy to be honest?
Amy: No, it's not always easy, because sometimes telling the truth can get you into trouble, like if you did something wrong. But at least everybody trusts you if you tell the truth. Being honest is best.
Interviewer: Should Kenny return the wallet even if he won't get a reward?
Amy: Yes. It would be doing a good deed. That would make Kenny feel better. He wouldn't have a guilty conscience either.

Amy's responses to these latter questions all fit Kohlberg's Stage 3. She shows Stage 3's concern with gaining social approval by being a good person; an understanding of the role of trust in human relationships; and an understanding of conscience as an inner standard that is the source of good feelings when you follow your conscience and guilty feelings when you don't.
Amy's stage mix offers a caution to parents and teachers: If a child's initial responses to a moral dilemma are at a lower stage, don't assume that that's the highest stage of which the child is capable. Further questioning ("Can you think of any other reasons...?") may reveal the true upper reaches of a child's moral reasoning.

If the teacher were presenting Kenny's dilemma to a class (rather than interviewing a child), she would ask Socratic questions that would try to draw out higher-stage thinking and get less mature children to respond to the reasoning offered by more mature peers.

Further Examples:
Elizabeth Saenger's **Ethics-in-Action Journals** (children note moral events in their school lives, how they responded, whether they could have responded more ethically; they bring these to ethics class)

Thought-of-the-Day Journals
Richard Gulbin, 7th-grade: **Creating a parallel moral dilemma**

Richard Gulbin, a 7th-grade student teacher at Cortland College, caught a boy cheating on a social studies test. He took the boy's paper and asked him to see him after class. Their conversation went like this:
Teacher: Why do you think I took your paper?
Student: Because I was cheating.
Teacher: Don't you think it's wrong to cheat?
Student: No, it's just wrong to get caught.
Teacher Gulbin decided the whole class would benefit from an open discussion of cheating. He decided to approach the issue by presenting a parallel hypothetical dilemma:

> John and Mary are students in 7th-grade social studies. On a test, Mary notices that John is looking at her paper and writing down answers. Mary knows John was at the game room at the mall the night before while she was studying hard for the test.
>
> What should Mary do? What would you do if you were Mary?

Students suggested a variety of things Mary might do: cover her paper, tell the teacher, try to get John to tell the teacher he had cheated, or tell John after the test why it wasn't fair for him to cheat.

The main value of the discussion, teacher Gulbin felt, was to begin to develop a student consensus that cheating wasn't fair to all the people who were working honestly for their grades.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: Teaching students how to solve conflicts fairly, without intimidation or violence.

Key Ideas

1. Teaching conflict resolution skills is important for the maintenance of a good moral community in the classroom.

2. Without conflict resolution skills, students will be morally handicapped in their interpersonal relations now and later in life.

3. Conflict resolution skills -- listening, showing understanding, expressing strong feelings without insult, and finding a mutually agreeable solution that meets the needs of both sides -- are among the most important moral competencies constituting the action side of character.

Strategies

1. A planned curriculum that has students think, write, and talk about how to solve various kinds of conflicts

2. Structure skills training that coaches students in conflict-avoidance and conflict resolution skills (Arnold Goldstein's **Skillstreaming the Elementary School Child** and **Skillstreaming the Adolescent** are examples of this; so is the **No Putdowns** curriculum.)

3. Using the class meeting to address common conflicts that recur among class members and to develop the class norm that conflicts should be solved fairly and non-violently

4. Intervening when necessary to help children, in the heat of an actual conflict, apply their conflict resolution skills. Peer mediation is an effective way to do this and gives peers a meaningful, character-building responsibility in the moral life of the school.

5. Making students increasingly responsible for working out their own conflicts without the aid of a third party.

Examples:

Elaine Herron, 5th-grade: Has the disputants each write three paragraphs:

- What was the problem?
- What were the causes?
- How can you solve this in the future?

THE TEACHER AS CAREGIVER, MODEL, AND MENTOR: Treating students with love and respect, encouraging right behavior, and correcting wrongful actions.

Key Ideas

1. Children need to form caring attachments to adults. These caring relationships will foster both the desire to learn and the desire to be a good person.

2. Values are best transmitted through these warm, caring relationships. In schools, as in families, kids care about our values because they know we care about them. If children do not experience an adult as someone who respects and cares about them, they are not likely to be open to anything the adult wishes to teach them about values.

Strategies

In their relationships with individual students and with their classes, teachers can maximize their positive moral influence through three complementary roles:

1. They can serve as ***effective caregivers*** -- loving and respecting their students, helping them succeed at the work of school, building their self-esteem by treating each student as having worth and dignity, and enabling students to gain a first-hand appreciation of the meaning of morality by being treated in a moral way.

2. They can serve as ***moral models*** – ethical persons who demonstrate a high level of respect and responsibility both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers can also model moral concern and moral reasoning by taking time to discuss morally significant events in the school and wider world.

3. They can serve as ***ethical mentors*** – providing direct moral instruction and guidance through explanation, storytelling, classroom discussion, encouragement of positive behavior, and corrective moral feedback – especially one-on-one correction – when students engage in behavior hurtful to self or others.

STRATEGIES FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL

CARING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: Using role models to inspire altruistic behavior and providing opportunities for school and community service.

Key Ideas

1. Character education should extend students' caring beyond the classroom into larger and larger spheres.

2. Students can develop their awareness of the needs of others, their desire to help, and the skills and habit of helping through: (a) exposure to inspiring role models, and (b) opportunities for service in their schools, families, and communities.

3. Service opportunities with the power to transform character are those that involve children in face-to-face helping relationships, so they experience the fulfillment of touching another's life.

Strategies

1. Students should study heroes and other examples of caring and courageous persons in history and the news -- then find everyday heroes in their own communities and tell their stories.

2. Service should begin in the classroom (e.g., through classroom helper jobs and peer teaching).

3. Students' first "community service" should be service to the school. The school is their community. Possibilities:

    - **School jobs** (In Andover's South School, for example, each class volunteers for a special school job; teachers meet with the principal to

match jobs to different grade levels; each classroom develops a plan for carrying out its job; and a class "foreman" meets with the principal to review the plan.)
- **"Class adoptions"** of younger classes by older classes
- **Cross-grade tutoring, coaching** (e.g., older kids coach younger ones in soccer and basketball and ref noontime games), and companionship (e.g., 6th-graders eat lunch with 1st-graders)
- A **service club** (e.g., Sweet Home Middle School's S.M.I.L.E. Club)
- **Student government** that maximizes schoolwide participation in solving school problems

SCHOOLS, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITIES AS PARTNERS: Helping parents and the whole community join the schools in a cooperative effort to build good character.

Key Ideas

Parents are a child's first and most important moral teachers. The school must do everything it can to support parents in this role.

Parents should also support the school's efforts to teach good values and character.

The school-parent partnership in character education has enhanced impact when the wider community (e.g., churches, businesses, youth organizations, and the media) also supports and promotes the core virtues.

Strategies

Schools can recruit parents as full partners in character education in many ways. They can:

1. Tell parents how vital they are in their child's character development.

2. Help parents understand how character is formed (by what children see, what they hear, and what they are repeatedly led to do).

3. Share some of the research that shows what powerful influences parents are -- and that shows what works (love, modeling, direct teaching, and discipline).

4. Put ideas and materials into parents' hands (e.g., **The Parents' Page**).

5. Sponsor parenting workshops (but have a hook).

6. Integrate parents, especially new ones, into the school community (through parent buddies, parent peer groups, and a parent "gathering place" in the school).

7. Involve parents on the planning committee for character education.

8. In addition to having parents on the Character Education Committee, have a committee comprised just of parents, whose job it is to keep other parents informed, get them involved, and plan special events (e.g., Grandparents' Day) related to the character program.

9. Increase direct communication with parents; examples:

    - Call parent before the school year (*"What can you tell me about your child that might help me do a better job as his/her teacher?*").
    - Invite parents, with their children, to visit classroom before the first day of school.
    - Send home **Monthly Calendar** of daily events (for the refrigerator).
    - Clearly communicate the school's core virtues and character education plans to all parents; survey the parents and invite their comments; hold an open meeting; invite parents to review materials and visit classes; send home materials; do a demonstration class (all these build trust).
    - Use **Back to School Night** to build understanding and support of the character effort; follow up in parent conferences (Scotia-Glenville Family Guide).

10. Change the timing of the first parent conference to the beginning of the school year; do goal-setting, with both parent and child (*"What would you like your child to learn in school this year?"*).

11. Help parents understand and support the school's discipline policy and know how it fits into the overall character effort (Ask parents to sign written commitment -- not just to sign an "awareness statement" -- to support the core virtues and rules.).

12. Help parents participate directly in the character education of their children through:

    - School-based activities (e.g., **Family Film Nights**)
    - Home-based activities:
        - Parent-initiated (e.g., dinner discussion, bedtime stories) (Can be suggested by school)
        - Child-initiated (e.g., school-assigned interviews of parents concerning their attitudes about drugs, their views on friendship, what values they were taught growing up, etc.)

13. Raise expectations of parents (e.g., **"Parent Participation School"**).

14. Help parents reduce the negative effects of TV, movies, video games, and other media on children's moral growth.

15. Establish a **Family Resource Center**, including counseling.

16. Help highschoolers—someday to be parents—learn the responsibilities and commitments of marriage and parenting and how to care for young children.

CREATING A POSITIVE MORAL CULTURE IN THE SCHOOL: Developing a caring school community that promotes the core virtues.

Key Ideas:

1. The school is a community with a moral culture.

2. The moral culture of a school is defined by its operative values, ones reflected in actual school practices and the behavior of the school's members (do people respect each other? is attention paid to moral concerns?) Operative values are true norms -- what people expect of everybody else and are willing, to some meaningful degree, to enforce.

3. The school's moral culture is important because:

    - It has a powerful effect on the *moral behavior* of the members of the school community (a positive moral culture pulls behavior up, a negative culture pulls it down).

    - It affects the *character development* of the members of the school. (If the school is a caring and honest environment, students more readily develop those character qualities. It's easier to become a good person when you are surrounded by goodness.)

Strategies

1. Creating a positive moral culture in the school involves defining, communicating, modeling, teaching, celebrating, and enforcing or upholding the school's professed core virtues.

2. Six elements are important parts of a positive moral culture:

    - Moral leadership, typically from the building principal but also from other staff and students themselves

    - Schoolwide discipline that upholds the school's values in all parts of the school environment

    - A schoolwide sense of community

- A feeling on the part of students that "this is our school, and we are responsible for making it the best school it can be" (participatory student government contributes to this as well)

- A moral climate of mutual respect and cooperation that pervades all relationships, those among adults as well as those between adults and students

- Time spent on moral concerns -- reflecting on the quality of moral life in the school.

> "*States, parents, and professional educators all have important roles to play in cultivating moral character. A democratic state of education recognizes that educational authority must be shared among parents, citizens, and professional educators*." A.Gutmann

Lickona, and many other researchers and writers, stress the importance of a "team approach" to implementing Character Education. To be most effective, the team should be composed of school, family, and community members…all working together towards common, agreed-upon goals. Each team member has an important role to play in the Character Education process.

The Role of the School

One must first of all realize that the word "school" refers to <u>all</u> staff members including teachers, administrators, counselors, media specialists, health professionals, paraprofessionals, cafeteria workers, custodians, and transportation personnel, just to mention a few. It is the responsibility of all these adults to model appropriate character in their day-to-day dealings with students, parents, and peers. Anyone entering the school doors should experience mutual respect, fairness, and cooperation in their relationships with others.

Schools must find and protect time for staff to examine the current state of character education in their schools and to critically evaluate future changes. Schools must continually examine issues related to character, including harassment, bullying, academic dishonesty, littering, and respect for self, school, and others. This may be accomplished through staff development, staff meetings, team discussions and other mutually collaborative efforts throughout the school year.

In addition, it is the role of the school to: 1) support parents in raising their children by becoming a vehicle for networking among parents and community service providers, 2) prepare the next generation of parents to learn about the meanings and responsibilities of being parents, and 3) exert extraordinary efforts to bring parents, school personnel, and community service providers together.

The Role of Parents

Schools and homes should be firm allies in the education of young people. This includes Character Education. Studies have shown that when parents are involved in the school, children get better grades, have more positive attitudes towards schoolwork, have higher expectations, and may exhibit more positive behaviors. (Henderson and Berla, 1994) This research has strong implications for building effective Character Education programs in schools. Parent involvement in the school's effort to foster character should result in more students demonstrating positive character attributes.

Parent involvement also assures their input and agreement on the focus, goals, instruction and activities of the school's Character Education program. They become active participants in the school's efforts and support those efforts through actions at home.

The Role of the Community

Schools and families will enhance the effectiveness of their partnership when they recruit and the help of the wider community where youth work and play. Businesses, religious institutions, government agencies, youth organizations, media, law enforcement, and senior citizens' homes and centers are all potential partners. Community involvement might include activities such as:

- Speakers for Career Days
- Employers (especially those who employ youth) discussing character traits requirements for potential employees
- Community service organizations including youth groups in planning and implementing service projects
- Animal shelters utilizing youth volunteers
- Food and clothing drives organized and implemented by cooperative adult/youth efforts
- Community recycling and conservation efforts led by adult/youth groups

Other Aspects of Effective Character Education

Finally, effective Character Education should not be limited to knowledge for the "head" but include practice for the "hands". That, in turn, leads to internalization in the "heart". Teachers should always be watchful for opportunities in daily instruction and school life to encourage student practice of positive character. Examples may include:

- Community/service learning projects.
- Cooperative learning.
- Conflict resolution.
- Effective communication skills, including listening and disagreeing with respect.
- Experience-based projects.
- Problem-solving approaches.
- Activities that result in an intrinsic reward.

Appendix K provides teachers with a list of potential *Nebraska L.E.A.R.N.S. and Links to L.E.A.R.N.S.* that, not only support Character Education, but provides opportunities for student to serve to others while meeting these stringent academic goals.

CHAPTER FOUR
Character Education and the Curriculum

> *"Don't worry that children never listen to you. Worry that they are always watching you."* Robert Fulghum, author.

Children develop character by observing and listening to others and then practicing what they have learned. Therefore, the family, school and community together have a responsibility to intentionally instruct and model good character, as prescribed by Nebraska State Statutes 79-725, 79-726, and 79-727. Character Education programs are dependent upon educators who possess the capacity to 1) model positive character, 2) teach developmentally appropriate concepts, 3) integrate Character Education into all content areas and 4) infuse Character Education into the all aspects of the school climate.

Teachers' Capacity to Model and Deliver the Curriculum

"As moral educators, teachers have responsibilities for transmitting the core values held sacred by our democratic society. It cannot be done subtly and haphazardly. It must be well planned, with knowledge and forethought by as many adults in the community as possible." Edward F. DeRoche, Mary M. Williams, Educating Hearts and Minds, 1998. In all educational settings, teaching is intrinsically and unavoidably a moral act and classrooms are caldrons of moral matter, ethical issues, and events that affect a young person's character.

Nebraska Statute 79-725, discussed in Chapter One, defines character education and supports a shift in perception from the teacher as a values-neutral individual to a leader in the development of morally literate citizens. In order to facilitate this shift, teachers must be given the opportunity for staff development and dialogue with peers regarding their role as character educators. Such opportunities and activities promote a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all Nebraska teachers.

Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

Character develops in stages. The teacher needs to accommodate students' current level of character development and guide them to a higher level of thinking and behavior by selecting developmentally appropriate curriculum, experiences, and instructional materials.

Integration into the Content Areas

Subject matter of a universal nature, such as character and values is most effectively taught when it naturally permeates several or all subjects. Mike Brugh, in his article Teaching Character Education Through Service Learning, *Social Studies Review*, Fall/Winter, 1997 stresses, *"*Character education is not a 'thing' to be added on to the curriculum, nor as an additional course or a separate unit in a course. Each teacher needs to ask, 'How will I teach them the subject content, and in the process help them to develop good character?""

While some content areas are richer in opportunities to provide direct concepts of character, all teachers have a responsibility to incorporate ethics and values into their particular academic area. Nebraska's **Leading Educational Achievement through Rigorous Nebraska Standards (Nebraska L.E.A.R.N.S.)** document identifies what students in our schools are to know and be able to do in reading/writing, mathematics, science and social studies/history. In addition, many of those **Standards** also reflect and nurture character education. **Nebraska L.E.A.R.N.S** that have been identified character related may be found in Appendix A through D.

The Nebraska **Links to L.E.A.R.N.S.** document shows how the content areas of agriculture, business, family and consumer sciences, foreign language marketing and the visual and performing arts help students meet Nebraska **Standards**. Specifically, **Links to L.E.A.R.N.S.** identifies the "essential learnings" of those six content areas and aligns them with Nebraska's reading, writing, math, science and social studies/history **Standards**. Specific "Essential Learnings" also reflect many character education opportunities and can be found in Appendix E through J.

Character Education is not limited to "what is taught" but also encompasses "how it's taught". Thomas Lickona in his work ***Eleven Principals of Effective Character Education*** emphasizes that character must be comprehensively defined to include thinking, feeling, and behavior. It requires an intentional and comprehensive approach that promotes core values in all phases of school life. Stand-alone programs and instruction are useful as a first stage in character education but must then move forward towards integration into all areas of curriculum and learning. According to Lickona, *"Character education and academic learning must not be conceived as separate spheres, rather there must be a strong, mutually supportive relationship. ... Because students come to school with diverse skills, interests and needs, a curriculum that helps all students succeed will be one whose content and pedagogy are sophisticated enough to engage all learners. That means moving beyond a skill-and-drill, paper-and-pencil curriculum to one that is inherently interesting and meaningful for students. A character education school makes effective use of active teaching and learning methods such as cooperative learning, problem-solving approaches, experience-based projects, and the like. One of the most authentic ways to respect children is to respect the way they learn."*

All teachers, through the way they structure their classroom, guide their discussions and lessons, and relate to adults and children, have the opportunity to teach character and create a moral community in their classrooms.

CHAPTER FIVE
Assessment

> *"Behavior changes in the young may not occur after a 6-week unit on 'justice' or a year of community activities on learning and practicing 'respect'. There are no quick fixes for character education programs. The influence of school programs may not be revealed until students have left the school setting. Behavior, maturity and life experiences may be influenced by the personal values and civic competencies taught at home, in the schools, and in the community."* Edward F. DeRoche, Educating Hearts and Minds, Corwin Press, Inc, 1998.

Fostering character takes time. However, that should not prevent schools from assessing their programs at regular intervals and exploring ways to get information about the program's effectiveness and influence on students, staff, parents and community members. This information should be used as an impetus for revision and improvement. If something isn't working, change it. However don't make the mistake of "quitting after the test". Consider inviting staff members, students, parents and community members to help plan strategies to address some of the issues raised by the assessments. "If we are not going to try to improve what we do, there is little sense in assessing it." William Glaser, The Quality School.

Considering these eleven questions before beginning the assessment process will help:

1. What are the goals and objectives of your character education program?
2. Who are your target groups? (e.g. students, staff, parents)
3. What are you trying to accomplish? (e.g. change school climate, improve student discipline, increase parent involvement, teach values across the curriculum, have staff model "good character")
4. When did you begin actively working on character education as a school?
5. Who in your school would be interested in the evaluation and have time to help?
6. Do you have funds available to support the evaluation?

7. Are there people available in you school district with expertise in evaluation? Who else do you know who could assist with the evaluation?
8. Are you interested in collecting qualitative data, quantitative data, or both?
9. What sources of data relevant to the evaluation of character education already exists in your school? (e.g. student discipline referrals, school climate audit, etc.)
10. Do you have any relevant baseline data collected prior to the inception of the program?
11. What data could be easily collected without investing a great deal of time or money?

(Jennifer S. Jones, Evaluator, *Ideas for Evaluating Your Character Education Initiative*, Utah Community Partnership for Character Development, 1998.)

Finally, throughout the implementation of a character education process, evaluation results should be shared with others. There are many potential audiences including: staff, students, parents, community members, school boards, professional groups, and civic organizations. Some of the ideas listed below (Jennifer Jones, Ideas for Evaluating Your Character Education Initiative) may be helpful:

STAFF

- For staff members, make oral presentations at a faculty meeting. Prepare overheads with highlights from the results of the major evaluation activities that the school selected, e.g. a Character Development Survey, a Student Knowledge of Character Education Concepts, a Character Education Implementation Survey, or other statistics collected on student discipline, student and staff attendance, etc.
- Distribute written information to colleagues such as summaries of the results of the surveys administered.
- Invite teachers to help interpret the results from each of the major evaluation activities and make suggestions for further investigation or actions to be taken.

STUDENTS

- Results of the student surveys could be distributed to students or discussed in class. Provide opportunities for students to reflect on the results and interpret them in much the same way that you do would be a valuable learning experience. Not only will students gain experience analyzing data, they will also be able to discuss how they feel about their school and how they would like to contribute to positive changes.
- Highlights from the year's character development activities and the results could be shared in a newsletter developed by students.
- Students might help plan activities to address some of the issues raised by the evaluation.

PARENTS

- If a school newsletter is published, consider including brief articles on school character development activities and the results of each activity's evaluation.
- Send home notes thanking parents who responded to survey requests and including a brief summary of the results.
- Invite parents to become involved in planning activities designed to address issues raised by the evaluation.

Character Education Resources

The following bibliography is only a beginning. It includes printed materials designed for teachers and administrators. The bibliography encompasses a variety of points of view, reflecting the belief that there is no "one way fits all" approach to Character Education that can adequately meet the needs of students and teachers in the public, private, and parochial schools throughout Nebraska. A multitude of information regarding Character Education can also be located on the Internet.

William J.Bennett, **Moral Compass: Stories for Life's Journey**, Simon & Schuster, 1995.
A companion book to The Book of Virtues, this instructive book gives more examples of good and bad, right and wrong, in great works from literature and in exemplary stories from history.

Rolfe Carawan, **The Character Revolution: Restoring America's Soul**, LIFEMATTERS Press, 1997.
Benjamin Franklin, statesmen, inventor and signer of the Declaration of Independence, achieved great distinction in American history. What made Franklin a man of greatness? Through insights and pointed anecdotes, this book seeks to disclose his timeless truths and principles – truths that are as relevant and instructive today as they were two hundred years ago.

Rolfe Carawan, **Profiles in Character**, LIFEMATTERS Press, 1996.
This book profiles extraordinary lessons from ordinary people that define what is best – and what is not- in the human experience. These examples encourage and motivate readers to follow in their footsteps.

Mirka Christesen and Susan Wasilewski, **Character Kaleidoscope**, Dude Publishing, 2000.

From rap songs to Mother's Day poems, from skits to musical choreography, from student published books to statistical tabulations of global character traits, this book is a kaleidoscope of ideas for integrating character development across the curriculum.

Edward F. Deroch, and Mary M.Williams, **Educating Hearts and Minds: A Comprehensive Character Education Framework**, Corwin Press, 2000.

This guide provides a framework to help schools design, organize, implement, and maintain a character education program that works for students, staff and community. It includes insights into reaching consensus, customizing a character education program for individual schools, developing a curriculum, providing staff development and getting community involvement.

Edward Deroch and Mary M.Williams**, Character Education: A Guide for School Administrators**, Scarecrow Press, 2001.

This book addresses school climate, core values, training personnel, forming relationships and concludes with guidelines for evaluation. It includes practical ideas and examples along with helpful articles, books and Internet resources.

Rick DuVall and Joellyn Cicciarelli, **Building Character and Community in the Classroom**, Creative Teaching Press, 1997

Filled with ideas for teachers to use in their classrooms, this book not only helps with community building ideas, but also addresses classroom management.

Thomas Lickona, **Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility**, Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishers, 1992

Dr. Lickona's twelve-point program offers practical strategies designed to create a working coalition of parents, teachers, and communities in the interest of building character into the lives of young people.

B.Edward McClellan, **Moral Education in America: Schools and the Shaping of Character Since Colonial Times (Reflective history Series)**, Teachers College Press, 1999.

A comprehensive history of moral education in American schools is traced from traditions in the colonial era to the present. This book illuminates both debates about the subject and actual practices in public and private schools. There is a thorough examination of recent theorists, including Lawrence Kohlberg, William J. Bennett, Carol Gilligan, and Nel Noddings.

Kevin A. Ryan and Karen E. Bohlin, **Building Character in Schools: Practical Ways to Bring Moral Instruction to Life**, Jossey-Bass, 2000.

This book clearly defines the responsibilities of adults and students in modeling and nurturing character and sets forth practical guidelines for schools seeking to become "communities of virtue where responsibility, hard work, honesty and kindness are modeled, taught, expected, celebrated, and continually practiced."

Gordon Vessels**, Character and Community Development: A School Planning and Teacher Training Handbook**, Greenwood Publishing Group, Incorporated, 1998.

Through its clear definition of terms, review of Constitutional and public support, comparative analysis of philosophical approaches, synthesis of many relevant theories of child development, K-12 core curriculum, description of many instructional strategies, and methodology for program evaluation, this handbook effectively prepares prospective program planners and character educators to create comprehensive programs that are developmentally appropriate, adapted to the unique needs and characteristics of school communities, and soundly evaluated.

Edward A. Wynne and Kevin Ryan, **Reclaiming Our Schools: Teaching Character, Academics and Discipline**, Prentice Hall, 1996.

Wynne and Ryan provide both elementary and secondary teachers with the support they need to integrate character education into their classrooms. It combines a comprehensive overview of theory with a hands-on guide to classroom techniques, and school-wide policies. A list of 100 suggestions helps educators apply the principles within the book to each and every classroom.

John Yeager, John Buxton, Amy Baltzell and Wallace Bzdell, **Character and Coaching, Building Virtue in Athletic Programs**, Dude Publishing (National Professional Resources, Inc.), 2001.

This book articulates the goals and objectives of athletics and the inherent "good" that can come out of a sports program. It explores the positive impact athletics can have on both spectators and participants and suggests that that impact extends beyond the playing fields and gyms floors. This book will support coaches and athletic directors in meeting their character-building responsibilities.